



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards

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Ag Tourism & Direct Marketing Work Group

June 13, 2006

Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Michael Isensee, June 15, 2006

Present:

-Alison Denlinger (alt)	- Deanne Gonzales	-Kim Pasciuto	-Steven Knudsen (alt)
-Angela Thompson	-Doug Filipponi	-Lora Pankey Eade	-Karen Nall (staff)
-Anne McMahon	-Elizabeth Rolph	-Mary Bianchi	-Michael Isensee (staff)
-Charlie Whitney	-Jamie Kirk	-Roy Parsons	-Brenda Ouwerkerk
-Colleen Childers	-Joy Barlogio	-Steve Sinton	(staff)

Guests: Nan Moss - Domaine B&B, Carolyn – Chanticleer Vineyard & B&B, additional B&B operator (name was not recorded – our apologies).

Absent:

Debra Garrison, Dick Rogers, Duane Waddell, Eric Michielssen (alt), Holly Sletteland, Karen Mansfield (ATF monitor), Kate Loftus (alt), MaryAnn Vasconcellos, Sandra Wallace (alt)

Handouts:

1. Agenda & Draft minutes (purple)
2. Events #3 June 7 mtg notes/report (pink)
3. Processing/Products Cmtee #3 June 13 report (green)
4. Template for Final Documents (bright pink)

Minutes Review (Michael)

Approved

Review of Approach (Brenda)

- Consensus was an ideal but short timeline and very complicated multiple topic subject matter.
- At this point especially seeking comments through formal committee reports as well as any individual comments on existing submitted reports (farmstay, camping, dude ranch). Individual comments on completed reports should be submitted to report scribe and to Michael (Ag Dept).
- Staff is appreciative of issues still being raised, as it is important for the ideas and concerns to move forward in the process.

Format of Final Committee Reports (Michael)

- A brief overview of the bright pink sheet detailing a format for final reports was presented. The goal of the report is not to follow a specific formatting technique but to include
 - notes and background information that should be known for those who utilize the reports moving forward,
 - areas of disagreement within the committee or between the committee and the broader work group, and
 - areas of agreement/consensus.
 - Another area that would be useful to include are committee thoughts on potential unintended consequences, suggestions on enforcement or compliance with suggested standards, and any comments on cumulative impacts or various different uses on one site or multiple sites with different uses in one area.

- All points of view should be represented in the report. Attaching names can be helpful for staff follow-up with certain points of view
- Work group members had various points of view on providing vote numbers on areas of disagreement or names of dissenters, as the committees are not comprised of equal numbers of each point of view, but were made on an *ad hoc* basis. Some people have served on only one committee, while others signed up for as many as four.

Initial Staff Meeting to Overview Project

- Staff (Pat Beck, Asst Planning Director, Kami Griffin, and Karen Nall from Planning and Bob Lilley, Brenda, & Mike, Agriculture Department) met to review the work group's efforts and start staff review and recommendations.
- Staff is going back to consider how recommendations implement policy (does it support the policy?) and is talking about how to implement work group suggestions. There may be items the two Departments do not agree upon.
- There is not a specific timeline at this point for how the project will move forward. Staff is meeting weekly during July.
- Brenda commits to bringing the work of staff back to the Workgroup to explain why staff took certain positions. This will occur prior to broad dissemination of the work.
- Staff also discussed the possibility of taking something back to the Board in the interim to get more specific direction on options for ordinance changes.
- Work group members asked about the possibility of several future meetings and about the timeline placing any meetings after fall harvest/crush

Presentation First Draft Thoughts: Products/Processing – (Committee #1) (Kim)

- Many considerations with issues ranging from small-scale home occupation kitchens to full-size commercial food processing factories (Smuckers, Heinz).
- The committee offered the suggestion that one should be able to process what they grow on site into value-added products with a low-level of permitting and should also be able to use the food processing kitchen to cater events on site with the same amount of permitting. Processing for others or for products grown elsewhere would require discretionary review, as the facility would likely be larger.
- Facilities over a certain size would also need a discretionary permit, as they would likely generate additional traffic and potential impacts (water, waste, noise, employees), although it was also noted that some types of processing require a certain size/scale to be cost-effective. The question is if such a facility should be allowed anywhere or if it should be tied to road size (such as what the sales committee offered), if it should only cater to the “neighborhood” and how that would be defined, or if it should be in a more centralized location (either on or off ag lands but in/near town where access and services are more readily available).
- Enforcement was noted as stumbling block to compliance.
- Committee outstanding issues include
 - rules for restaurants (who should be allowed to have them and under what circumstances). It was noted that the existing standard appears to scale them appropriately at 800 sq.ft. for prep serving areas, keeping them limited in scope. (Karen Nall requested the Committee review restaurant standards for clarification).
 - How to address impacts such as noise, impacts to neighboring agriculture, nonagricultural neighbors, employees, traffic, water use/standards, odor, wastewater, impacts of multiple facilities.
 - If food product production in ag areas should be limited to a home occupation only. [Editor: Would ag processing be considered as a home occupation option for processing on site without employees and be considered as an option with an “easy” permit, leaving other forms of ag processing as still requiring a MUP?]
 - Work group suggestions included allowing food processing that caters to processing of neighbor products, having road size dictate location of facilities, or limiting what some consider to be industrial uses of ag land. Brenda reminded committee that wineries are ag processing, not

food/beverage processing and are considered a type of ag operation. It was pointed out that allowing any kind of processing would open the door to corporate food processors to locate in inappropriate locations, but facilities also need to design to handle seasonal, peak production

Presentation Latest (4th) Draft: Temp/Special Events – (Committee #3 Events) (Elizabeth)

- Committee agreed that “active ag” was important for easy-permit level events. Did not agree on what constitutes active ag.
- There continues to be disagreement on the number of people that would constitute a regulated event. #s range from 25 to 50. The question was asked if the definition of an event could be based on the total # of events. If a site had infrequent gatherings of 50, these would not be considered an event, while frequent gathering of 25 would be.
- There is committee agreement on a number of items.
 - The following should be exempt from permit requirements: private gatherings, normal business operations, tours/workshops/classes relating to ag operation/natural resources
 - Some limited # of annual events should be allowed. Work group members appeared to think this was generally a good idea.
 - Parking should be on-site. The use of group transportation from off-site (a hotel or park & ride) should be allowed/encouraged.
 - Enforcement/compliance issues are critical
- There is committee disagreement on a number of items:
 - Whether active ag should be a pre-requisite for all events (it should be for “easy” permits). Some thought it can not be secondary and incidental to an ag use without active ag, while others thought that merely passing through an ag area, experiencing ag while driving, and being on a rural property should qualify as an adequate ag use.
 - How should nonprofit organizations be treated. They impose similar burdens to neighbors but can offer community benefits. A suggestion was to treat a donated site as a key feature in allowing nonprofit events. Some feel that if a site obtains a permit for events, it has the option of offering some of those permitted events to nonprofits.
 - Industry-wide events. Should there be an exemption based on this type of criteria, and, if so, should it be capped at a certain number of event days (4 per year has been offered as a suggested)? The events again impose certain burdens on neighbors/infrastructure; however they also offer farmers the ability to directly market their offerings, often at a time of peak production (such as pre-Halloween for pumpkins). The idea of four per year would allow a farmer to showcase seasonal crops.
 - Retirement of permits if not used. Some feel that a permit, once obtained, should be retained as a “right,” while others believe it should retire as other permitted uses that are not utilized for a period of time
 - Night lighting, noise limits, hours of operation, protection of the night sky views
 - For low-level permits, active ag should be required
 - A permit btw a Zoning Clearance and Site Plan should be considered. It would include a site visit by the Planner to ensure the site was as shown on plans. It would not trigger CEQA, but would have to meet certain criteria
 - A relationship exists between frequency and size.
 - Some thought easy permits should only allow ag related/themed events; others thought a certain amount of events, allowing up to 1,500 people for events with no ag theme should be allowed
 - Some thought no new facilities should be constructed, while others thought bathrooms and staging/storage areas should be allowed.

Report on Lodging/B&B (Committee #6 Lodging) (Steve)

- No written report was available, as the committee had just met that afternoon.
- The report from May 25 was elaborated upon.
- The committee is suggesting that the table represents their thinking for an easy permit, tying an increasing # of rooms to an increasing parcel size. If a smaller parcel size wants more rooms, it needs a

MUP. Work group concern was expressed by some of the large size of some facilities (up to 7500 sq. ft.)

- Neighbor notification not included if the acreage was met.
- Some thought that acreage was an inadequate substitute for an on-site ag use. Others thought the B&B use would not pushing people toward farmstays.
- Being on larger roads or within a certain distance of urban areas was not viewed as necessarily important, as the B&B use was not considered to be a significant traffic generator. Some work group members disagreed with this thinking, stating that if rural lodging that is not specifically tied to an agricultural use is an option, it should be along primary travel routes, since this is expanding a nonagricultural use out into agricultural areas.
- There was input that the farmstay rules for active ag did not make sense, since they would require growers to produce over \$25,000 in annual income. It was clarified that the farmstay rules included this as one of three alternatives to qualify as active ag, if a person had fewer than 100 acres of land being grazed or less than 10 acres planted but operated so intensively that the farm produced more than \$25,000.
- There was concern that the B&B as getting away from the intent of a family in residence. Some thought lodging should be limited to owner in residence only. Others thought a family in residence was adequate, while some did not think there needed to be on-site residents.
- A visitor (B&B operator) asked why the work group was considering requiring an ag component for B&Bs. The policy (visitor serving uses) being implemented was explained. The visitor explained that appropriate B&B uses have limited impacts on traffic, can be beneficial to neighborhoods, and are economical to open as small operations only if the residence exists. Large B&Bs are proposed as the only way to generate adequate income to recoup the investment of new construction.
- Some work group members felt that allowing B&Bs, especially new construction, was creating future boarding houses and that discretionary permits should be required for the use.
- Karen Nall requested input from the Committee on the concept of an “Inn” category.

Upcoming schedule:

June 29: Templeton @ 6:30-pm
#8 Signs – First Draft
#1 Products—Second Draft
#3 Events – Final Draft
#6 Lodging – B&B Final Draft

July 11: SLO– Final Work Group Meeting
#8 Signs – Final Draft
#1 Products – Final Draft
Revisit other submitted drafts for final
comments, review of process to come.